

Comcast to sell advertising for Verizon FiOS TV

June 24 2009, By DEBORAH YAO , AP Business Writer

(AP) -- Setting aside their rivalry in the interests of business, Comcast Corp. said Wednesday it will sell advertising for Verizon Communications Inc.'s FiOS television service in 10 markets where they both compete.

Starting in the fall, Comcast's advertising sales division, [Comcast Spotlight](#), will sell local and regional ads known as spot cable for Verizon.

The five-and-a-half-year deal covers ad sales in Philadelphia, Boston, Baltimore, Fort Wayne, Ind., Harrisburg, Pa., Pittsburgh, Portland, Ore., Richmond, Va., Seattle and Washington, D.C.

"Even as we and Verizon compete in other areas of our businesses, we both recognize the value of being partners in the advertising business," said Steve Burke, Comcast's chief operating officer, in a statement.

While it's not unusual for competitors to do business together - for example, satellite TV operators and phone companies pay fees to carry cable networks owned by cable TV operators - Comcast said the Verizon deal is its largest ad sales agreement thus far.

Comcast Spotlight President Charlie Thurston said the company has begun expanding its ad sales efforts to encompass other providers. In January, Comcast reached an ad sales deal with another rival, [Dish Network](#) Corp. Comcast sells ads for Dish's ten regional sports networks

feeds in seven markets.

Comcast Spotlight and its partners reach about 30 million subscribers nationwide. For national advertisers who want exposure across the country, Verizon's ad inventory will be handled by the National Cable Communications, or NCC. The NCC is owned by Comcast, Time Warner Cable Inc. and Cox Communications Inc.

Shares of Philadelphia-based Comcast rose 17 cents to close at \$13.79 on Tuesday while Verizon, based in New York, was up 50 cents to \$30.52.

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